

MAY 15 1961

STATINTL

THE NEW FRONTIER

—Behind the Scenes

By WILLIAM V. SHANNON

Washington, May 15—"How do you like the place?" President Kennedy asked a guest at breakfast last week.

"Oh, I like the White House fine." A year ago I had planned to live here myself, but I'm willing to settle for this breakfast every week," replied Sen. Humphrey (D-Minn.), the Majority Whip.

Note: A year ago last week—May 10—Humphrey lost the West Virginia primary to Kennedy and withdrew from the Presidential race.

President Kennedy will shake up the Joint Chiefs of Staff before the end of the summer. Gen. Lemnitzer, chairman of the joint chiefs, and Admiral Burke, the Navy chief, will be replaced.

Allen Dulles, director of Central Intelligence, and Richard Bissell, one of his top deputies, will also be dropped in another three or four months. One reason Dulles has been kept on temporarily: as long as he is head of CIA, his presence neutralizes GOP criticism of the Administration for the Cuban fiasco.

Edward Hollander, former executive secretary of Americans for Democratic Action, offers liberals dissatisfied with the Kennedy Administration this anecdote:

"I agreed with the man whose friend inquired: 'How's your wife?'

"The man replied: 'Compared to what?'"

This belongs in the no-news-is-good-news department. Robert Weaver, the Housing and Home Finance Administrator, has established himself as a quiet but definite success. The first Negro to head a major agency, he has won acceptance on Capitol Hill. His relations with Sen. Sparkman (D-Ala.) and other Southerners influential on housing legislation are good. The Housing bill seems assured of passage.

"Mr. Bender," the CIA agent who stage-managed much of the unsuccessful Cuban invasion, is still in Miami and still active behind the scenes. He is unavailable to the press, but Cuban exiles report they have seen him.

Bender is a middle-aged German. He first came to the attention of American authorities when he worked with the French underground against the Nazis during World War II, joined U. S. intelligence after the war. He is a vain, domineering man who refers to himself in the third person: "Bender will have another cup of coffee" or "Bender thinks so-and-so—"

The Cuban Revolutionary council passed a resolution after the invasion failed asking U. S. officials to withdraw him, but it has not been acted upon.

A State Dept. official complained the other day: "Whatever happened to the monsoon? All winter we had been expecting that by April all of Laos would be bogged down in torrential rains. But April has come and gone and they're still fighting, monsoon or no monsoon. I think maybe we've all been reading Somerset Maugham too much."

The Administration is preparing a series of programs to stabilize the world price of coffee, cocoa, lead, zinc, and other commodities. If successful, these programs will solve a chronic problem in our relations with Latin America.